

Kidney patients in Malaysia to increase to 106,000 in 2040, says Health DG

KUALA LUMPUR: The number of Malaysians with kidney failure is expected to reach 106,000 by 2040, says Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

He said what was alarming was that 30 per cent of them would be young people under the age of 45, and this could have a negative impact on the country's socio-economy.

He said to date, there were about 40,000 kidney failure patients undergoing dialysis treatment nationwide.

“According to a study, about 8,000 new patients were confirmed in 2018 and this trend is increasing every year – if this continued, then the number of patients requiring dialysis would reach 106,000 in 2040,” he said when officiating at the National Kidney Day 2021 virtually here yesterday.

As such, Dr Noor Hisham said the Health Ministry (MoH) Nephrology Service, the Malaysian Society of Nephrology, and the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia (NKF) would be implementing various events to support awareness campaigns aimed at promoting kidney health among Malaysians. This would include public awareness activities,

regular kidney disease screening for the public, and engaging members of the public as ambassadors or advocates for kidney patients.

At the event, NKF Malaysia chairman Datuk Dr Zaki Morad Mohamad Zaher said for most kidney patients, by the time they were diagnosed, 90 per cent of their kidney function had gone.

“To prevent chronic kidney disease, and its complications, we encourage the public to undergo kidney disease screening at health facilities.”

Dr Zaki said studies had found that 61 per cent of new patients requiring dialysis treatment suffered from diabetes, while another 16 per cent had high blood pressure due to unhealthy eating habits and lifestyles.

The ‘World Kidney Day’ has been celebrated in Malaysia since 2006. Falling on the second Thursday of March every year, it serves to raise public awareness of kidney disease. For the first time, this year’s event themed ‘Living Well with Kidney Disease’ is celebrated virtually via ‘MyBuahPinggang’ Facebook Live platform, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

— Bernama